

SECTION 1026 EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE

1026.1 General. In addition to the means of egress required by this chapter, provisions shall be made for emergency escape and rescue in Group R and I-I occupancies. Basements and sleeping rooms below the fourth story above grade plane shall have at least one exterior emergency escape and rescue opening in accordance with this section. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency egress and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room, but shall not be required in adjoining areas of the basement. Such openings shall open directly into a public way or to a yard or court that opens to a public way.

Exceptions:

1. In other than Group R-3 occupancies, buildings equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2.
- 1 In other than Group R-3 occupancies, sleeping rooms provided with a door to a fire-resistance-rated corridor having access to two remote exits in opposite directions.
- 2 The emergency escape and rescue opening is permitted to open onto a balcony within an atrium in accordance with the requirements of Section 404, provided the balcony provides access to an exit and the dwelling unit or sleeping unit has a means of egress that is not open to the atrium.
- 3 Basements with a ceiling height of less than 80 inches (2032 mm) shall not be required to have emergency escape and rescue windows.
- 4 High-rise buildings in accordance with Section 403.
- 5 Emergency escape and rescue openings are not required from basements or sleeping rooms that have an exit door or exit access door that opens directly into a public way or to a yard, court or exterior exit balcony that opens to a public way.
- 6 Basements without habitable spaces and having no more than 200 square feet (18.6 m²) in floor area shall not be required to have emergency escape windows.

1026.2 Minimum size. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet (0.53 m²).

Exception: The minimum net clear opening for emergency escape and rescue grade-floor openings shall be 5 square feet (0.46 m²).

1026.2.1 Minimum dimensions. The minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be 24 inches (610 mm). The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be 20 inches (508 mm). The net clear opening dimensions shall be the result of normal operation of the opening.

1026.3 Maximum height from floor. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have the bottom of the clear opening not greater than 44 inches (1118 mm) measured from the floor.

1026.4 Operational constraints. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools. Bars, grilles, grates or similar devices are permitted to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings provided the minimum net clear opening size complies with Section 1026.2 and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening. Where such bars, grilles, grates or similar devices are installed in existing buildings, smoke alarms shall be installed in accordance with Section 907.2.10 regardless of the valuation of the alteration.

1026.5 Window wells. An emergency escape and rescue opening with a finished sill height below the adjacent ground level shall be provided with a window well in accordance with Sections 1026.5.1 and 1026.5.2.

1026.5.1 Minimum size. The minimum horizontal area of the window well shall be 9 square feet (0.84 m²), with a minimum dimension of 36 inches (914 mm). The area of the window well shall allow the emergency escape and rescue opening to be fully opened.

1026.5.2 Ladders or steps. Window wells with a vertical depth of more than 44 inches (1118 mm) shall be equipped with an approved permanently affixed ladder or steps. Ladders or rungs shall have an inside width of at least 12 inches (305 mm), shall project at least 3 inches (76 mm) from the wall and shall be spaced not more than 18 inches (457 mm) on center (o.c.) vertically for the full height of the window well. The ladder or steps shall not encroach into the required dimensions of the window well by more than 6 inches (152 mm). The ladder or steps shall not be obstructed by the emergency escape and rescue opening. Ladders or steps required by this section are exempt from the stairway requirements of Section 1009.